

*File House Armed Forces***ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET**

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Query by Chairman Melvin Price, House Armed Services Committee, re El Salvador

FROM:

SW

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

5 May 1982

25X1

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TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

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OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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Legislative Liaison

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In regard to the request by Chairman Melvin Price, House Armed Services Committee, for our comments on a letter from Representative Gonzalez to Chairman Price, please note that the subject at issue is whether or not there are U.S. military personnel -- specifically, Special Forces personnel -- serving in El Salvador. We responded to Chairman Price's request for our comments earlier by pointing out that this subject is under the jurisdiction of the Defense Department, not this Agency, and therefore we would be unable to comment. Per LLD's speed letter at ref, our answer has been considered "totally unsatisfactory" and we have been requested to give a briefing to Chairman Price's staffer, Bill Hogan, on this subject.

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To 9: Would you please go back to Bill Hogan again and explain to him that this Agency is not responsible for the assignment of Special Forces personnel. That is a Defense Department responsibility and the Defense Department is the Government agency that should respond to Chairman Price's inquiry.

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SPEED LETTER		REPLY REQUESTED		DATE 31 March 1982
		YES	NO	LETTER NO EA 82-0789
TO			FROM	Legislative Liaison 7824 Hqs
ATTN: 2E14 Hqs				

I received a telephone call from Bill Hogan, Counsel, HASC, asking whether CIA has any comment to make on a letter sent to the Committee Chairman Melvin Price (D., IL) by Congressman Henry Gonzalez (D., TX). (See attached excerpt from the Congressional Record, 24 March, which gives the full text of the letter.)

If your answer is to refer him to DoD, can we be specific about where in DoD?

ALL PORTIONS OF THIS
MEMORANDUM ARE CONFIDENTIAL

Attachment

CONFIDENTIAL**REPLY****SIGNATURE****DATE**

H 1108

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

March 24, 1982

hundreds of millions of dollars implies, wrongly or not, that there is something improper to hide.

Many citizens have expressed their concern over the Olympic coin program proposed in H.R. 3958 and S. 1230. All they would like is a realistic program that every American could afford. Perhaps we could all learn from the good commonsense and restraint they have shown through these letters. Frequently, the simplest most straight forward plans yield the best results. Let us keep this in mind when we consider the proposals to commemorate the Olympics and raise money for our athletes. ●

WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING IN EL SALVADOR?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ) is recognized for 15 minutes.

● Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, we are told that our troops in El Salvador are only serving as advisers, as training specialists. Yet, I have not one time seen any news report that quotes an American soldier talking about his job. The one and only picture we have seen of American soldiers at work in El Salvador was provocative enough to cause the American Ambassador to send the commanding officer of Army personnel packing. With that one brief moment of light, the curtain descended. What are our troops really doing in El Salvador, and why are not they allowed to talk to the press—or if they are allowed to talk, why are not their words reported? Salvadoran troops are interviewed; they are photographed; their stories are reported. Peasants are interviewed, their desperation reported, their misery portrayed—but you never hear a word reported from our own Embassy personnel. Why not?

This past weekend, two graduate students in San Antonio approached me with startling words about what our troops may really be doing in El Salvador. These students were earnest, their convictions sincere, and their concern obvious. What they told me suggests that our troops in El Salvador are more than advisers, and they are engaged in more than the role of instructors.

These students told me that they had run into a soldier who was in transit. This soldier stated that he was in the Special Forces, and that the 10th Special Forces Group is assigned to El Salvador. According to him, this unit consists of 220 men. He said that members of the unit had participated in military missions and had been engaged in combat.

This is in complete contrast to the officially stated U.S. policy. That policy supposedly prohibits American soldiers even to carry rifles, let alone be engaged in any kind of combat operation—even as advisers.

Those who recall the incident of the unit that was photographed carrying

rifles will also remember that the Ambassador made a great show out of throwing the unit commander out of El Salvador. A few days later, there were newspaper stories that said the administration was reconsidering its order against permitting soldiers to carry anything other than sidearms. Then there was nothing. No word about revised orders, no word about the ejected colonel, nothing. I said at the time that the order against carrying arms was unreasonable, and that it was also ridiculous that our troops in El Salvador are not getting hazardous duty pay—although our diplomats are.

The question then and now is, what are our soldiers doing?

If we do have soldiers engaged in combat patrols, or in any form of combat—even as advisers—then our role in El Salvador is very different from what the official line says it is. There is a world of difference between a Green Beret who is training soldiers in the Salvadorean equivalent of Fort Benning, and one who is out on a combat mission. There is a world of difference between the level of commitment that is implied. There is a world of difference between a soldier committed to train others, and one who is in any kind of combat situation. Among other things, there is the fact that the War Powers Act is involved in any such difference.

At the time of the famous picture incident, we were told that our soldiers should not have been armed. If they should not have been armed, one wonders, where did the arms come from? The answer to that is probably that these were, in fact, the weapons of the soldiers in question, and they were being carried pursuant to an order of some kind. Now it happens that those troops were not in combat, or anything approaching combat—but clearly they felt that they might become engaged, that they might at the very least have to defend themselves.

The incident raised many questions, none of them ever answered.

With reporters swarming all over El Salvador, it is remarkable—astonishing, in fact, that the one brief glimpse is all the film that we have seen of American personnel. We never see them interviewed, never see stories that explain what their jobs are, how many there are, or where they work. We never see interviews with civilian personnel, either, or stories about their work or what they do. Could all this silence be telling us something? Could it be telling us that there is no information from the field, because that information would contradict what our public policy is? I have to wonder, especially in light of what I was told by those two students this past weekend.

The one fact that I can confirm is that there are, indeed, Green Berets in El Salvador. The Pentagon admits that there are, but denies that any particular unit is assigned there.

The silence is so overwhelming that I cannot help but feel the administration may, in fact, be violating the War Powers Act. It is a question that no individual Member of this House could ever answer. Therefore, I have asked the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee to look into this matter. I have also asked the distinguished chairman of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee to consider this matter. These are colleagues who can obtain information more readily and with a greater degree of confidence that will be accurate than I could.

I offer for the RECORD a copy of my letter to Chairman PRICE:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D.C., March 22, 1982.
HON. MELVIN PRICE,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services,
Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MEL: I have received uncorroborated information of an intensely disturbing nature, and am writing to ask that you provide whatever verification you can. I am making this request because I do not believe the Administration would be likely to provide a complete and informative response to an individual Member, but would do so on the basis of an inquiry from your Committee.

My understanding has been that the U.S. military personnel in El Salvador and other Central American countries are simply training specialists serving on a temporary duty (TDY) basis. However, information I received last weekend suggests that this is not the case; that U.S. Special Forces units are in El Salvador and perhaps elsewhere as well. According to my informant, the 10th Special Forces Group is in El Salvador; that this organization consists of 220 soldiers; and that members of the organization have been engaged in combat missions in one degree or another.

I know, of course, that Special Forces personnel are especially trained in counterinsurgency operations, and as such are not only highly qualified combat soldiers, but experts in training techniques as well. However, there is a vast difference between the mission of soldiers who simply provide training, and soldiers who participate—even in an advisory capacity—in combat missions.

I would be greatly indebted to you if you could inquire whether there are, in fact, Special Forces personnel in El Salvador, or for that matter Honduras or Costa Rica. If there are such personnel, are they there as individuals, or as Special Forces units? Have any U.S. personnel been involved in anything other than training?

I am enormously concerned that the role of the United States forces in Central America may be different in nature and scope than what has been reported. I know that your Committee would have great reason to be concerned if the nature of our role is more than simply one of providing necessary military training. Since such questions are of concern to your Committee, and since long experience has taught me that Administrations are not entirely forthcoming about inquiring on such sensitive issues as this, I would be more grateful for your inquiries on this, and for any information you can provide to me.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

HENRY B. GONZALEZ,
Member of Congress.

March 24, 1982

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

H 1109

Mr. Speaker, I would not raise these questions but for the fact that this House has before been told that American policy is one thing, only to learn later that it was another. We have been led down the path before—beyond the point of return. I would not want that to happen again. Every poll I have seen suggests clearly that the vast majority of Americans do not support even our present involvement in El Salvador, let alone the kind of involvement I was told about. If the War Powers Act is indeed being violated, that would be a grave matter—grave on its face, graver still because the sin would be compounded by deception.

We need some answers. We ought to be asking questions. We ought to look at the answers with skeptical eyes—for we must learn from the mistakes of the past, if we want to avoid repeating them. What are our soldiers doing in El Salvador?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. COELHO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. COELHO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

WILLIAM STANTON PICHER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. PHILLIP BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

● Mr. PHILLIP BURTON. Mr. Speaker, San Franciscans will sorely miss the late William Stanton Picher. When he died recently of a brain tumor at age 67, the bay area lost a special friend of conservation and the arts. But we can be comforted by the knowledge that he left a special legacy, a legacy of community service with particular relevance today. He did more than achieve notable progress through a number of individual projects. At a time when some would relegate environmental protection and artistic endeavors to the status of dispensable luxuries, we should appreciate the work of someone who demonstrated that they are instead integral parts of a democracy. William Stanton Picher has permanently enhanced the natural and cultural environment of countless people in our area.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert into the Record the following tribute to Mr. Picher, beautifully composed by his close friend, Clifford Conly:

A Missouri native, William Stanton Picher was a descendant of President Lincoln's great Secretary of War; a student of poetry, he received his master of art's degree from Harvard University. He served his country in World War II in the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps. After the war, his life revolved around his bookstore and art gallery, until he closed it in the early 1950s.

At that time, he moved to the San Francisco Bay Area and dedicated his life to public service. His interests were far ranging. An early study and unique collection of ancient Chinese porcelain led him to take

an active interest in the establishment of the Avery Brundage Oriental Art Collection at the DeYoung Museum. He extended his interest to the entire Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, where he served with distinction on the board. He was also a member of the Museum Society, and became its president from 1975-1977. He was an early member of the Board of Directors of the Oakland Museum, and a trustee of the American Federation of Arts. He also was an ardent supporter of musical activities in the Bay Area, and recently was appointed to the Board of Governors of the San Francisco Symphony.

William Picher was actively involved in choosing and contributing fine art objects to grace the Symphony's new home, the Loise M. Davies Symphony Hall. His taste and collections in contemporary art were well known and he was a firm believer in furnishing support to local artists.

But his greatest contribution lay in his awareness of the environment and the field of natural conservation. He understood the threat of uncontrolled development long before conservation became a household word. He was interested in birds from an early age, and became president of a local Bay Area Audubon chapter when it comprised a very small group of persons. From this position, he was able to found and raise support for the West Marin sanctuary known as Audubon Canyon Ranch.

For the following twenty years, and until the day of his death, his untiring work on behalf of fund raising, land acquisition and management, and organizational activities never ceased. In fact, his work almost single-handedly started the conservation movement in West Marin that has resulted in the establishment of two great parks. His steadfast efforts led to the preservation of much land along Tomales Bay and Muir Beach, and, more recently, in Sonoma County. Audubon Canyon Ranch, which features natural preservation and educational programs at its three preserves, will remain his greatest monument.

Many people of the Bay Area, dedicated to the preservation of the quality of life on our planet, will miss him.

UDAG: URBAN ENTERPRISE WITH A TRACK RECORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WILLIAM J. COYNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

● Mr. WILLIAM J. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, this week the administration announced its legislative plans for the much discussed but little tested urban enterprise zones.

In its eagerness to create still more tax breaks, in this instance for firms which locate in distressed areas, I would hope the administration does not compound the damage it has caused HUD's urban development action grants (UDAG), a job creating program with a proven track record.

Funds for UDAG, a program established by the Carter administration in 1977, have been reduced by a third in the administration's most recent budget request. The Carter fiscal 1981 budget provided \$675 million; the Reagan fiscal 1983 budget asks \$440 million. It is no secret that some at the Office of Management and Budget, including Director David Stockman,

would like to see the program eliminated altogether. The enterprise zone proposal is apparently designed to take up the slack that results from UDAG fund reductions or elimination.

I do not believe that reducing the Federal urban presence will necessarily mean more private investment and jobs, a philosophical tenet of the enterprise zone concept. Herbert Lieben-son, president of the National Small Business Association, has described the situation in many urban areas. "Most small firms are hanging on by their fingernails just trying to survive," he says. He notes that "Money's what's needed, not tax deductions."

UDAG provides that money, and the private investment that results provides the jobs. At my request, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) has projected what we might expect if the UDAG program is funded at \$500 million per year—the amount authorized by Congress in fiscal 1982—through fiscal years 1982-84. CRS projects that we could expect to create or retain more than 200,000 private sector jobs, \$11 billion in new private investment, and \$98 million in new local property tax revenues. This extrapolation is based on data compiled in a recent HUD evaluation of the UDAG program.

While the administration's lack of enthusiasm for the UDAG program is clear, I would hope that the decision-makers consider exactly how much 200,000 jobs, \$11 billion in private investment, and \$98 million in new local taxes can mean in a depressed economy.

We should preserve and improve Federal programs such as UDAG, programs which do the job they were designed to do. An experiment with enterprise zones, if it is accompanied by further reductions in the UDAG program, would be a mistake. The UDAG program is a winner. We should keep it.

I would be happy to share with my colleagues the complete text of the CRS report on the projected performance of the UDAG program over the next 3 years. Please contact my office if you desire a copy of the report.

AMERICA RESPONDS TO THE "DO-IT-YOURSELF" BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. REUSS) is recognized for 30 minutes.

● Mr. REUSS. Mr. Speaker, the word we hear, on both sides of the aisle, is that President Reagan's budget proposal is "dead in the water."

The President has told Congress to "put up or shut up."

We shall "put up."

Last week, as chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, I testified before the House and Senate Budget Committees and presented an alternative "Do-It-Yourself" congressional